state—three lines centered. The problem for layout begins when other elements are added: a list of officers, a list of agencies, a trade-mark, a tabulation of products or activities. The layout problem enlarges when it is demanded (as it usually is) that all these things be assembled in a typographic design that shall have style, individuality, distinction. Let us assume an hypothetical demand for the most distinguished style possible; we can work down from that to more ordinary levels. We begin with paper.

Bond paper

Bond paper is the universal United States vehicle for business messages. If you aim at the height of distinction, your bond paper, of a suitably high grade and rag content, will be heavy—and it will impose certain conditions about printing. It will not be printed from type. It will be either lithographed or printed from dies or from engraved copper. Bond paper adequate to the higher levels of distinction is not sympathetic to type printing; it is too hard.

Linen writing

A distinguished style can be achieved with type, of course, but on another kind of paper, all-rag "linen writing" of a heavy weight. One notices that "linen" does not mean a fabric finish pressed into the sheet; it refers to a kind of paper; "Linen" comes either as "wove" or as "laid." The "laid" paper has a certain antique atmosphere (the old papers were laid papers) redolent of long establishment. The extra thickness of the paper somehow adds a touch of distinction—or you may cross the middle line of mediocrity and use a paper unusually thin.

Letterpress on bond

You may use type on bond paper, but not in these higher latitudes—you have to come down a few degrees in the quality of the paper to do that, and by that descent you lose a part of your style. The descending grades of bond paper admit more wood pulp into their fabric, and less size, and meet type printing halfway.

Some, by devious manipulation, can be made to receive half-tone plates.

Color

Bond paper will be pure white. "Linen" paper will be white or "natural." Colored paper is a trifle unsafe in this heady level of grand style. A good definite blue may serve some occasions without loss of tone if the printing is in black only. For certain ultra-sophisticated enterprises other colors may be in order—positive colors, yellow, cerise, jade—they require to be treated with sophistication.

The three available craftsmen

When it comes to the matter printed on the paper, and the method for getting it there (still pursuing a high aim), the road fans out into three trails, and the trails lead to broken ground and hard going. You have three craftsmen to depend on for getting the paper printed: the lithographer, the die-stamper, the plate-engraver. Each of the three cherishes his own vice. Each has evolved a standard of excellence in his own particular craft that (for him) is the highest notch of distinction. For us—trying to make a letter-head in what *we* consider good style—none of their standards of excellence serves.

Their vices

The lithographer's highest good is shaded lettering, or black-letter of a degenerate variety, or gray "tint" line backgrounds; banknote embellishments. The die-stamper delights in embossed effects—raised block letters (his own kind of letters), shiny and fat, with glistening trade-marks in red lacquer. A critique of the stationer's (plate-engraver's) art would run to a thick pamphlet. Wedding-announcement script, copper-plate roman, extraordinary Old English are his calligraphic resources. There is no way to control the plate-engraver. He may be willing enough to meet your requirements, but he simply can't. Take his traditional patterns away from him and he flounders (and his traditional patterns have sunk far, far away from good traditions). The die-

stamper, also, is beyond control. If you want die-stamping you have to take what you get. The lithographer is able to make facsimile copies of type or of drawn lettering, and is consequently a trifle more amenable to layout.

So the case stands. The process most suitable for printing on bond paper—copper-plate engraving—is not available unless you want your letter-head to look like a social form (as sometimes you do). The die-stamper's art in its usual manifestation is not distinguished. You rely on the lithographer and supply him with prepared "copy" which he reproduces in facsimile.

Design

In any case—printed from type, from intaglio plates, by lithography—what are the practical and artistic reasons for placing the elements of a letter-head thus and so? Most letter-heads are set in type (hand lettering, if it is used, will take its cue from type). It will be convenient to think in terms of type.

A focus

The matter goes at the top of the sheet. Elements that dribble down the side of the page are intrusive—and impudent—not complimentary to the reader—impolite. The material should stand in sharp contrast to the typewriter text below—*i.e.*, it should be a *unit*, a well-organized panel of inscription across the head of the sheet. There should be one emphatic focus of interest—only one. This focus will usually be the name of the firm. It does not need to be in the center of width, but it needs to be unmistakably a focus. All other items will play up to it. If there are various groups of secondary items they will be in such positions as to hint at balanced symmetry. Symmetry is not essential, but balance is. One face of type will be used throughout. If there is a departure from that face it will occur in one place only—and the departure will still remain in the general type family. For example,

One type face

a letter-head set in Scotch might break, at an emphatic point, into Bodoni or Bodoni Bold; or a design in Bodoni Book capitals might make use of a line of Bernhard Script. A focus, balance, and one face throughout, these are the rough rules.

The bizarre

The above remarks apply to the normal, polite, business letter-head. It is not always desirable to be too normal, or too polite; a touch of the bizarre may be demanded. There are not any precepts to guide the performer attempting the bizarre. Except, possibly, one. When you deliberately set out to be fantastic you take care to be quite, quite simple; over-elaborated phantasy is as flat as labored comedy; mustard in touches, not slabs.

What controls the scale?

If one undertook to be guided by the principles of sound design, the *scale* of a letter-head ought to be set by the typewritten letter below—which is, of course, the essential part of the document. But if one followed out this precept to its logical (esthetic) conclusion, the result would be unfortunate, because typewritten matter is not a good standard to follow, from the typographic design point of view; and a letter-head kept subordinate in style and color to typewritten script would be a feeble affair. So the only way for the designer to proceed is to disregard the typewritten matter as a key to his design, merely keeping it in mind as an area below his panel that will be occupied by a scattering texture of feeble color and no particular form. But even that "control" over his design will lead him to use a light hand in shaping his typographical arrangements. A letter-head that makes use of heavy color and large scale (proper enough if one were thinking *only* of a panel of type seven inches long and one and one-half inches deep) is an unpleasant device when it is seen in conjunction with the scattering script below that it is supposed to aid and abet; such a heading not

Braggadocio

only smothers and extinguishes the letter, but injects a note of braggadocio on the sender's part—a tone that the sender probably had no intention to introduce at all!

Copy furnishes the clue

The clue to the actual form that a given letter-head will take usually occurs in the copy. Is the firm name short, providing material for a compact design in the center of the page? Or unusually long, suggesting a frieze of capitals across the top? Are there groups of names to be shown in small size that require to be balanced on this side and that? Is there a trade-mark that will make a focus of color and force a symmetrical scheme? If the heading is printed from type, the variety of textures available in a given face—caps, small caps, italic, etc.—provides a wide opportunity for ornamental spice. If the design is drawn, care needs to be exercised to keep it from becoming too varied and ornate; the freedom that hand lettering permits may cross the line of decorum demanded in a polite form such as a letter-head.

Printing on envelope

If the designer is meticulous, the return mark on an envelope will be kept in suite with the letter-head that it serves. The style or turn of design that gives individual character to a letter-heading will be echoed in the typography of the envelope mark. The function of the return mark is in the first place practical, and its practicality will be served, as in the case of the letter-head, by making the street address of the sender plain and clear. The post office prefers to have these return marks on the front of the envelope; native modesty leads one to put them on the back. But the upper left-hand corner of the front face is no doubt the most practical place. Taste would inspire one to keep this notice rather plain, without flamboyance in the form of ornament. If it is made ornate, the post office insists that it stay three and one-half inches away from the right end of the envelope, to give room for canceling stamps, etc. If there are various statements that need to be included in the return notice, trade-mark, etc., the end of the envelope may be made into a panel, arranged either vertically (as the address reads) or across the short end of the envelope. The design of the fittings of an envelope ought to be worked out with everything standing—stamp and cancellation pasted on the corner of the dummy and a typewritten address indicated—so that one may have a sense of the balance of all the elements.

Labels

Receiver's name paramount

THE design of a shipping label begins with a concern for the label's practical performance. It is called upon to present the recipient's name and address so that these can be read easily. The sender's device, and his instructions to the post office, need to be legible, of course, but they take a place second in importance to the recipient's name. This name usually appears in typewriter type—a feeble display at best—so the problem of elevating the recipient's name to a position of importance is difficult. About the only means provided for performing this feat is blank space—an ample area of clear paper around the typewritten lines. The practical part of the problem is a problem of keeping the two features apart, cutting the sender's device sharply away from the space allotted the receiver.

How much decoration?

With the practical requirements satisfied, the designer turns his attention to making his label as attractive as possible, which attractiveness may be considered its advertising function. Any further advertising burden laid upon a shipping label—beyond making it good-looking—is apt to overload the instrument. And the amount of area (and graphic energy) devoted to good looks is a matter that needs to be held within bounds.

An exuberantly decorative label is somehow not quite complimentary to the receiver; its fanfare of trumpets and its draped bunting relate to the *sender*, not to the receiver; courtesy requires that the emphasis be laid on the receiver, that he be permitted to set his own pitch of gayety on the occasion when the package comes in. This is a fine-drawn point, no doubt, but such points enter into layout.

The typewritten address complicates the problem of good looks just as it does the problem of practical performance. Theoretically, the typographical furnishings of a label intended to bear a typewritten address ought to take their scale from the typewriting—labels are never designed so, but it would be interesting to attack the problem from that angle. Typewriting type has never been studied from the good-looks point of view; it has been allowed to merely "grow up" without schooling or manners, consequently it is hard to work typewriting into any scheme where appearances or deportment matter; which *obiter dictum* applies to the design of letter-heads as well as to the design of labels.

Size The size of a shipping label is a question of convenience—convenience of handling in the typewriter and the addressing machine, and in the pasting-on process. Its proportions are a matter of taste, plus the space requirements of the matter to be printed on it, reckoning in a good liberal area for the address. Its color is, first, a practical consideration—light enough to make the address plain—and second, a matter of taste. It can

Color afford to be gay in color; and its color will be chosen so that it contrasts and harmonizes with the envelope or wrapper on which it is pasted. When paper is applied to paper in this way, the designer seizes the chance to make an effect with harmonious color. Typographically the designer avoids two errors: overwhelming the typewritten address with too vigorous size or color

of type, and overwhelming the recipient with too great exuberance of ornament.

Signatures

THE idea behind a specially drawn firm name, or name of a product, is the idea of achieving trade-mark individuality. This intention, commendable at all points, is sometimes frustrated by the proprietor of the name himself, who approves a design in a kind of letter that nobody can read. There is a prevalent style in firm signatures that illustrates how the individuality idea can be stultified in another way. At the close of the last century some inspired sign-writer persuaded every merchant who coveted a possession of this *Unfortunate episode* kind to have his name written on a slant, and a flourish struck under it. The brood of firm signatures let loose at that time (and still hale and hearty) all have the same physiognomy. Their astonishing family resemblance defeats the purpose that inspired them. This urge toward distinction on the part of the merchants of the 'nineties left results that handicap advertising even now; because a trade signature that has been made valuable by custom and the passage of time is as inviolable as the laws of the Medes—unchangeable by god or man.

A designed signature of the right sort will combine *Singular, and legible* legibility and singularity. It needs to be drawn in a kind of letter that anyone can read—and yet it must depart from that kind of letter a little—it must add a dash of originality. It cannot be abnormally fat or unduly lean if it is to combine with the usual run of type. If it is whimsical, its whim must not interfere with reading; it can be whimsical within the bounds of calligraphic taste. If it varies from the usual roman it will be in *What style of letter?* script, or in black letter; there are good and bad styles for those characters. There was a time when well-

drawn roman letters were unusual enough in themselves to be individual and striking. Perhaps they are so still.

The fact that a trade signature will be used for a long time warns against a style of lettering too much on the crest of the wave of prevailing fashion. Fashions change so rapidly, even in printing, that a *chic* thing of 1928 may be outmoded in 1940. There are forms of letter that are above fashion—beyond the reach of the fluctuating tides. They were fine in A. D. 50; and will be just as fine in A. D. 5000.

This comment on designed signatures, like the comment on trade-marks, is placed here to aid the layout specialist in his war against commonplace designs. It is not properly cogent to a discussion of layout technique, because the layout man's job is to *place* signatures, not to design them.

Trade-marks

A tough morsel

A TRADE-MARK—the usual trade-mark—is a necessary evil. It is utterly indigestible. Twist his menu as he will, the layout man cannot turn it into good food. Forced by the necessities of merchandising to work a trade-mark into his design, he has not even an oyster's chance—there is no way to coat the offending bit with a glutinous capsule that will make it go down easier—it has to be swallowed as it is, plain, raw sand.

The agency's opinion

The advertising entrepreneur, too (the long-suffering agency man), admits that there is something about a trade-mark that makes it unassimilable. His instructions (reading between the lines) confess it. He says: "The bug has to go in. Get it in somehow." Now this is a truly comic situation—this trade-mark that has to go in, and is not fit to go in. Because a proper trade-mark is just the kind of garnish that the designer scours the fields for. A trade-mark suitably conceived is one of those bits of significant ornament, standing halfway

between pictures and type, that make admirable decoration for a typographic scheme.

Out of control

As the case stands, the advertising architect has no authority over trade-marks. All he can do is to waive all personal responsibility for the havoc they work. He learns to take them as they come, without comment. He has been enjoined frequently enough to keep his hands off.

But once in a while a new trade-mark is born. On that momentous occasion the designer may be asked for his advice. If he should be so honored, the following comment may serve him.

Trade-marks are survivals of a time when the laity were unable to read, when a man's business had to be stated not in words, but in symbols. In our present state of literacy the informative element in a trade-mark is not important. Nevertheless—on the basis that everything in an advertisement needs to do its bit—if a trade-mark is to be used as advertising apparatus it ought to be studied on the side of its significance.

The ideal

A proper trade-mark needs to *mean something*. At its best it is an epigram—a terse and pungent summary of some significant fact about the business. The words to be stressed are "epigram" and "summary." A trade-mark that attempts to illustrate a process in detail, for example, fails in both counts. A manufacturer of mowing-machines who tried to get a hay-field into his trade-mark, as well as an adequate representation of his engine at work there, would stultify himself. Wisdom and mature years would inspire him to choose a sickle as his emblem.

Malleable

A good trade-mark will be malleable. It will be possible to turn it into a variety of forms without destroying its essence. The mowing-machine manufacturer's sickle, for instance, could be stamped with a steel punch into metal, stenciled on packing-cases, etc., etc.—

things that could not have been done at all had he stuck to his original idea.

No shields

Trade-markery is a country cousin of heraldry; it can claim that kin, but native good taste will keep it from trying to ape its noble relative. I mean that trade-marks in the form of shields are a joke—as comical as those mid-Victorian trade devices surrounded by the Garter. Things like that, in first instances (they are now meaningless survivals), were efforts on the part of Trade to sit in the same pew with Race. Under the modern dispensation, with kings at a discount, the feudal touch may be dispensed with. One makes this comment about shields as trade-marks because a cosmic law operates to convince every expectant proprietor of a new trade-mark that he wants his device in the shape of a shield.

Flexible

A good trade-mark is the thing that lives inside a boundary line—not the boundary line itself. It should be possible for the device to step outside its circle, or triangle, or what not, and still be the same—an unmistakable emblem. In other words, marks that depend for their individuality upon triangular frames, circles, squares, etc., are weak brethren; they are of a low order of trade-mark vitality.

Typographic flavor

For the greater number of advertising uses a trade-mark design needs to be given a typographic flavor. It will stand in close relation to type in the usual advertisement and its stance will be more comfortable if it is brought into sympathy with type. This means that the proprietor will have to relax the rigor of his rule and allow his design (originally rendered in soft lithographic grays and stipples) to be redrawn in positive line, with considerable paper showing. It is not necessary to ape the style of a woodcut in this effort after typographic flavor; but it is necessary to echo, to a certain extent, the crisp black lines and

open white areas of type. A printing type is a *stamp* essentially—a metal punch such as carpenters use to put their names on tool handles—and a trade-mark to be used with type needs to participate in this stamp quality.

III

THE actual process of designing an advertisement cannot be demonstrated unless the circumstances of the specific advertisement are known. No two instances will be alike, no two designs will be the same. One sequence of trials and rejections (one designing operation) is bound to differ from any other sequence. The fixed conditions in any problem are few, the variable factors many; and the variable factors are the ones that have most influence upon the shaping of the design. Before any particular instance can be discussed one must know what the actual "copy" is, what specific work the form is intended to do, where it is to appear or to be sent, what kind of people it will address, what funds are at its disposal—in other words, one has to discuss a specific advertisement, not merely an advertising form.

Our next enterprise will be shaped to meet these conditions. It will necessitate a return to the first station of our expedition. Starting at that point, we will go over the trail again, pausing, as we did before, at the camps we set up on our first traverse, newspapers, magazines, booklets—and this time we will look at specific instances.

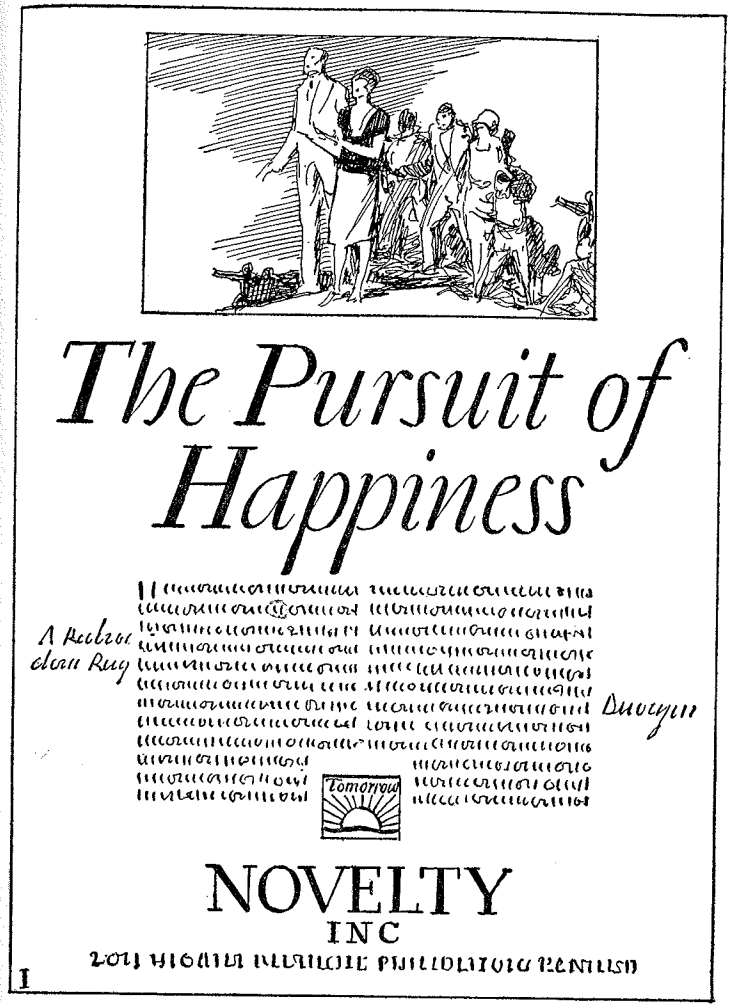
There are two ways in which an examination of this kind can be carried out. One way will be to inspect actual advertisements, pieces printed and published. Such a method will be *a posteriori* criticism of things already made; it will be able to say how such things should have been done, not how they actually were

done. A second method will be to start with specific elements—*a priori*—and arrange them; and then comment on the various trials, choices and rejections. This latter method is the one I shall adopt. This choice will mean that the designs and discussions will be the designs and discussions of a single individual—which is a handicap. But it may happen that one person's processes will serve as an example of the processes of advertising designers in general.

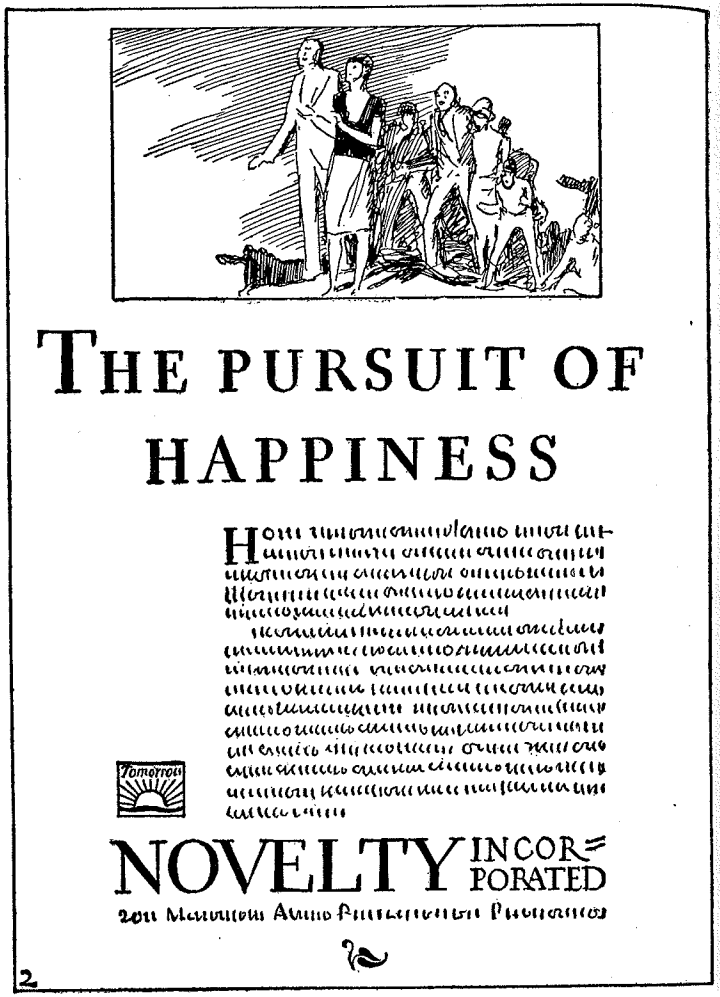
I provide the conditions surrounding each one of the following examples—copy, space, general intent, etc.—and then proceed to design within those conditions. I try to have the conditions governing each case as nearly like real conditions as possible. The copy is hypothetical copy, but the progressive sketches are *bona fide* progressive sketches—*i.e.*, they are not "cooked up" to make a nice demonstration. I show the rough sketches that embody the gropings toward a possible scheme, and comment on their inadequacy or their promise of good performance; and then show the arrangement that seems to be the best and try to explain why it is best. The "best" specimen in each case is only relatively best; it is not presented as an ideal or standard; the method does not aim to develop strikingly new and potent advertising forms; it aims merely to get as close as possible to the facts of the process of design.

Four-column newspaper

The first example of layout in action is a newspaper advertisement of 4 columns width by 165 lines—8⅜ by 11¾ inches. It is an "institutional" advertisement, the kind that public-service companies and savings-banks use to evoke a progressive and hopeful state of mind. It involves a picture, a "catch line," a body of argument, a trade-mark, and a signature. The presentation is to be done in a lively spirit. The picture is



in line, drawn in a rectangular frame, but may be cut up. The name of the firm has not been cast in any fixed form. The client sets no limitations except that the trade-mark must be used as furnished. (I have assumed throughout the series that the client does not

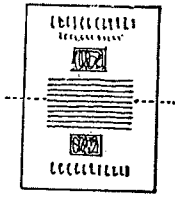


need to be "sold"; that he is intelligent enough to leave the details of cobbling to the cobbler. "Selling the client" is an art in itself, and would require a treatise all its own. It has no bearing on simon-pure layout.)

The process starts with No. 1. This is the first shape the elements take when they are scribbled down in the space. It is the obvious and easy way to place them: picture, displayed line, text, signature, one centered above another. Design concentrates upon the following points: (1) A reasonable width for the picture determines the width of the text matter below; the vertical lines so made, reaching (optically) from the top of the space to the bottom, are agents for holding the whole pattern to a certain degree of unity. (2) The longer displayed line is extended beyond the mentioned vertical lines, the long line of the signature is extended also, but not so far as the "catch" line above. The design in general is obvious and commonplace, not particularly pleasing as pattern, and not conspicuous; there are too many other advertisements arranged just so.

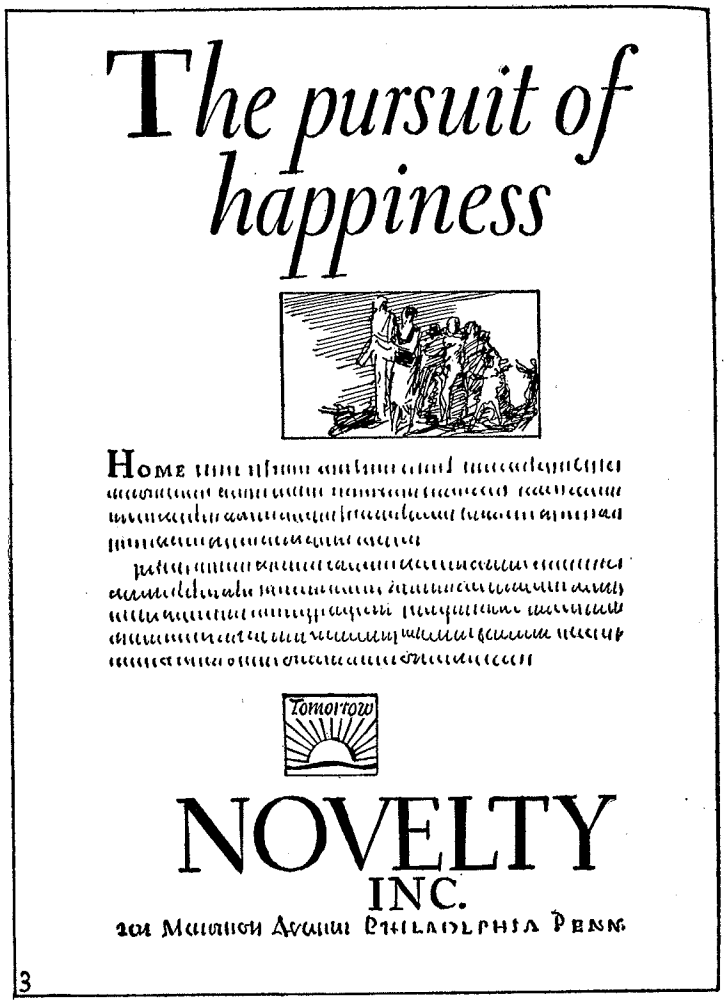
No. 2 introduces a slanting line made by the beginnings of the displayed lines and the initial of the paragraph. The trade-mark and the initial letter of the signature are arranged in line with the left boundary of the picture, and the right boundary sets the limit for the text measure. These are efforts to make the map more interesting and more conspicuous. The trade-mark smothers the firm name to a certain extent. It seems necessary to introduce the small centered ornament at the bottom to finish off the pattern—a sign that the general arrangement is ailing slightly.

No. 3 attempts further acrobatics. The picture is scaled down; the words of the heading are promoted in importance. The slanting line at the top is repeated in reverse at the bottom in the arrangement of trade-mark and firm name. There is a good, vigorous whipping backward and forward of lines throughout the design that makes the affair lively without shaking it to pieces.

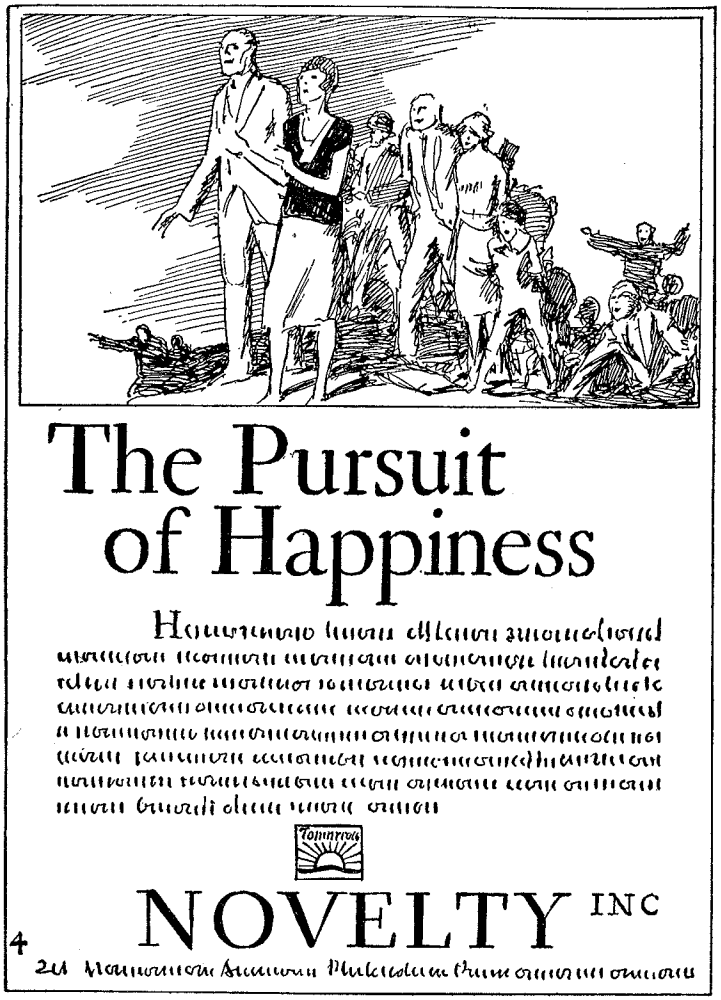


Horizontal balance

The unity of the design is preserved by a loose kind



of symmetry on either side of a horizontal axis; text in center, picture above and below, two balancing groups of lettering. The right and left boundaries, marking off extreme width, help to keep the arrangement a unit. The important words are given every chance to be seen.



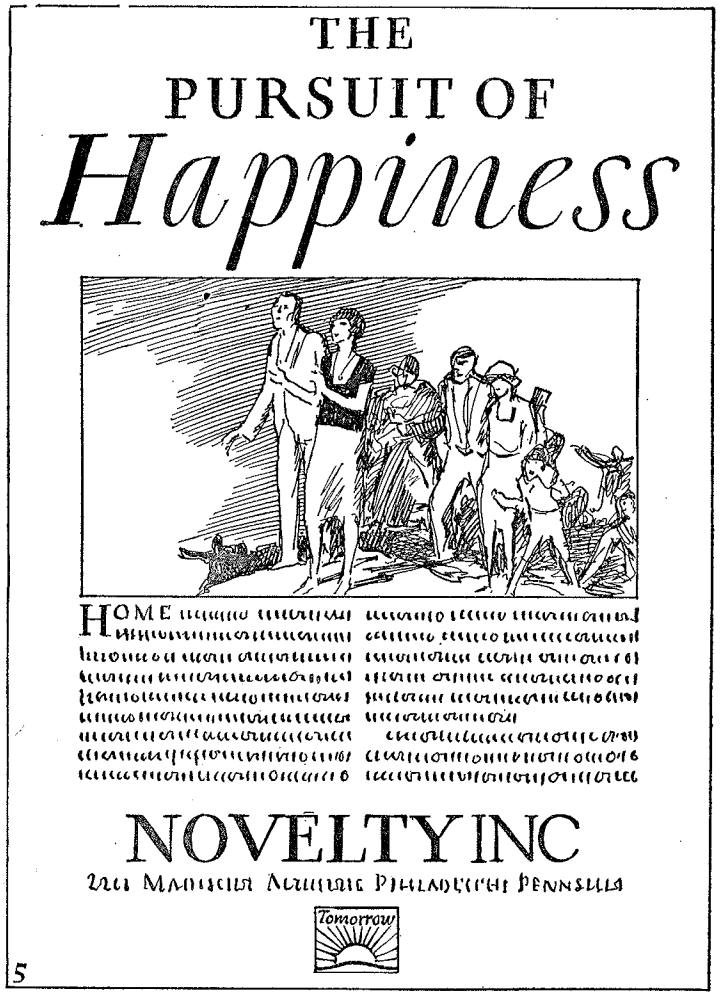
No. 4 runs the picture full measure, diminishes the arresting function of the heading phrase and transfers that duty to the picture and the firm name. A slanted controlling line, traced from the trade-mark to the heading, is used to overcome too great rigidity. A

blank space in front of the firm name balances a blank space to the right of the heading lines; these two blank spaces make a line of sight across the letterpress that counters the slanted line noted above and augments its effect. Since such a large share of the "arrest" responsibility is laid upon the picture, it follows that the map of the picture needs to be vigorous and unusual. A monotonous or ordinary picture could not properly be allowed so much space.

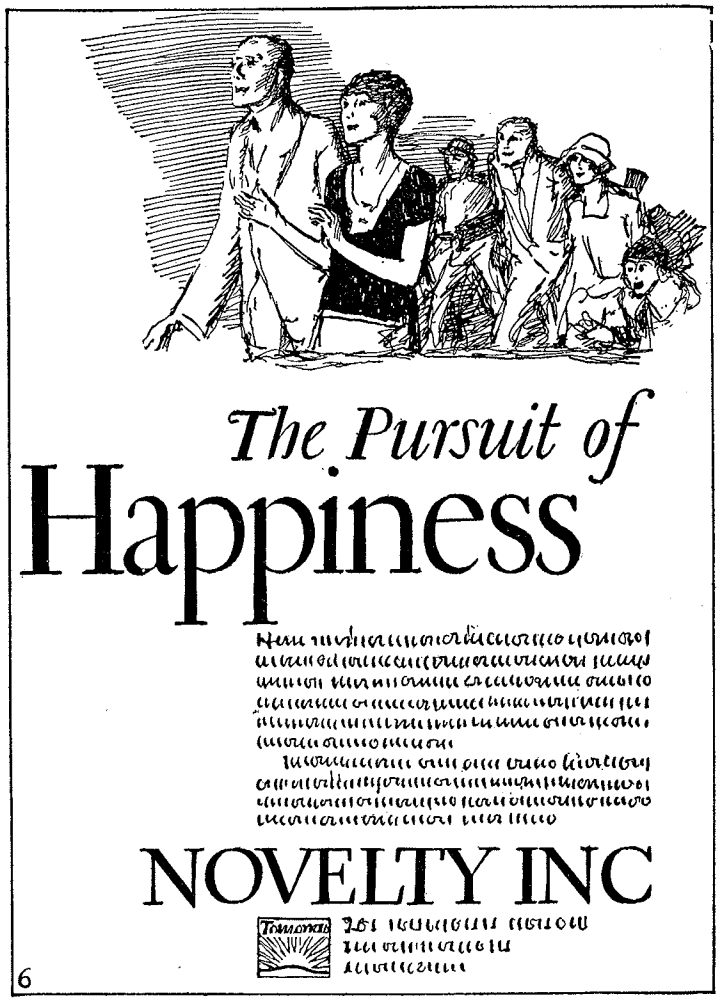
These four trial arrangements raise the question (unless it has been settled beforehand): If one element is to be stressed, which element shall it be? Is it "pursuit"? Is it "happiness"? Is it "novelty"? Is it the drama of the picture? One of these ideas will need to be put ahead of the others. No. 1 gives first place to the complete phrase, "the pursuit of happiness." No. 2 presents the four ideas with equal emphasis. No. 3 probably puts the major graphic stress upon the word "novelty." No. 4 makes chief use of the picture.

Nos. 5 and 6 work on the assumption that the idea, "happiness," is to be stressed. No. 5 returns to a symmetrical scheme. It will be legible if the heading does not need to read into the paragraph of argument—*i.e.*, if the paragraph begins a sentence of its own. As a pattern of textures and colors it is good. Its pleasing map, and its dignity and sobriety, would make it conspicuous on a rough-and-tumble newspaper page. Points of design are these: (1) Proportion of picture area to solid letterpress area; (2) two-column arrangement of letterpress; (3) capitals for "the pursuit of" and their sizes and arrangement; (4) length of the line "happiness" as related to the letterpress measure, and length of the lines "novelty, inc." and the address.

No. 6 is a play for unusual map. The picture is taken out of its frame and a part of it only is used large size. The strong vertical line from the figure to the trade-



mark is obvious, as is also the relation of the second "p" in "happiness" to this line. There is another line of design made between the "n" of "novelty" and the dark area in the picture. The shapes of the blank areas and the arrangement of the address lines are to be



noted. The designer's intent in contriving these various lines and shapes is to produce a *pattern* that shall convey an impression of lively movement.

Of these six schemes, Nos. 1, 2, and 4 would be least effective, with No. 2 better than 1 or 4. Of the others,

5 and 6 are better than 3. No. 6 would probably be the most vigorous and attractive design of the lot, with 5 a close second.

Single-column newspaper

The next newspaper example to engage our attention is a long single-column advertisement. There are a number of points of interest to be developed: the main argument about cost, a secondary talk about local manufacture and cheap transportation, a coupon request for booklet, etc. The number and variety of these features complicate the problem of one-column design—which runs the risk, even without such complications, of breaking up into too many elements.

No. 1 is the designer's first idea—defensive triangles of brickwork at the top and bottom, with a Cheltenham Bold set-up to meet the weight of these and of the signature logotype (to be used "as is"). The heading attempts to echo the association signature, but is not emphatic enough to make a head for the column. The three elements, "Low," etc., "Brick," etc., and "Ohio," etc., are too nearly alike in emphasis.

No. 2 attempts to put the weight of the signature nearer the middle of the space, and by that means prevent dispersion of interest. The side rules aim to tie top and bottom together. The heading is made largest, with "Ohio brick" next, and "Economical upkeep" third in scale of emphasis. The coupon attracts attention by its angular position. 2 is better than 1, but not yet enough of a unit.

Gradation of color

No. 3 tries for unity by placing a strong picture at the head of the column, with "Low first cost" next in color, and "Ohio," etc., third; *i.e.*, a gradation of emphasis from bottom to top—a unifying device. The italic heading and coupon lines are not successful. They were intended to make the area conspicuous, but their slanting lines do not help to develop any important point. They may be noted as illustrating an effort to